Question of the Week!

Q: Has Kentucky's Compliance Plan for the No Child Left Behind Act been approved or denied by the federal government and will there be additional testing this year because of the federal legislation?

A: KDE submitted Kentucky's plan to the federal government on January 31, 2003. We have received no input as to the acceptance or rejection of that plan. A visit from federal government representatives is planned for April 15 and Kentucky should know by the end of May whether our compliance plan is acceptable or needs some revisiting to satisfy the requirements of the law. While Kentucky's proposal does include some additional testing for the future, this year's testing (Spring 2003) will **not** be affected. The number of tests, time recommended for each, and the content areas tested at each assessed grade for KCCT and CTBS/5 are the same as last year. (Note: We are discontinuing the 5th grade reading longitudinal study.)

Writing Cluster Leader Training Rescheduled

The Region 2 Writing Portfolio Scoring Training for *high school* cluster leaders has been rescheduled for March 14. The session will take place in the WKU South Campus, Room 151. Registration will begin at 8:00 and the session will end at 4:00. The Region 2 Writing Portfolio Scoring Training for *elementary* cluster leaders has been rescheduled for March 18. This session will also be held at WKU's South Campus. If you have questions, please contact Tammy Stephens at the Region 2 Service Center (270-746-7063).

The Region 7 *high school* writing portfolio training has been rescheduled for March 11th and will be held in Waterfield Hall at Morehead. (Even with passes, parking is difficult. Try to carpool if possible--or even meet just off campus and ride in together.) Bring a laptop if you have one.

Directions:
US 60 by-pass turn left at Jerry's restaurant. Go straight at light.
Take right onto Ward Oates. Then right onto Earl Clements.
Drive through parking area. This will bring you to Waterfield on the left. Sign in the grass will identify RSC 7. We will meet on the first room on the left on the first floor. You may park in big area in front or behind building on the hilltop lot or any other place you can get a spot.

CATS Online

Commissioner Wilhoit sent the following information to all Superintendents about online assessment availability for eligible students with disabilities.

   "Based on our extensive preparation, the Kentucky Department of Education is ready to offer

eligible students with disabilities the opportunity to take the spring 2003 Kentucky Core Content Assessment online. The CATS Online Assessment is an assessment accommodation for students with disabilities that meet **ALL** of the following three criteria:

1. Students with an IEP or 504 Plan that specifies the need for a "reader" as an instructional and assessment accommodation.
2. Students who require and routinely (e.g., daily to weekly) use textreader or screenreader (i.e., text to speech) technology in order to access printed material in classroom instruction and assessment.
3. Students who have accessed and used the CATS Online Practice Area sufficiently to be comfortable with site navigation and independently reading the content with their textreader or screenreader.

The KDE in cooperation with eCollege of Denver has developed the CATS Online Wizard to allow LEAs to register their district, schools, teachers and eligible students for participation in the CATS Online Assessment. Although the spring assessment is a few months away, we strongly encourage those of you with eligible students to begin the steps necessary to prepare both staff and students for this unique means of participation in the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT).   (NOTE: The CTBS 5 NRT is not currently available in an alternative format).

By visiting the KDE Web site and entering "#CATS Online" in the Keyword/Search box available at the top of any page, you will be able to locate the required information for participation in the CATS Online Assessment (See topics listed below). If you have questions about any of these issues please contact the KETS Help Desk at (502) 564-2002 or toll free within Kentucky at 1-866-538-7435.

Topics available on the webpage:

1. Checklist of critical issues for participation in CATS Online Assessment.
2. What is the CATS Online Assessment and how does it work?
3. What are the instructional implications of use of this accommodation?
4. How does a district register for the Online Assessment?
5. What steps must a teacher follow in preparation for the Online Assessment?
6. What are the procedural and security processes to follow to prepare for student participation in the Online Assessment?
7. How school staff can access and use the Student Practice Area.
8. CATS Online Assessment workstation daily cleanup guide.
9. Background on the CATS Online Fall Pilot."

Administration Code Training
Our office will be offering another Administration Code Training session on March 12, 2003 from 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM in the 18th floor conference room at the Capital Plaza Tower in Frankfort. Please contact Kathy Moore (kmoore@kde.state.ky.us or 502-564-4394) to register.